

THE FAMOUS
HISTORY
OF
FRIAR BACON,
With the Lives and Deaths of
BUNGEY and VENDERMAST.

PART the FIRT.



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BRITISH MUSEUM



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THE
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OF
FRIAR BACON.



CHAP. I.

Of the Birth and Education of Friar Bacon.

HE was born (by most Men's Opinion in the West of England, and was son of a wealthy Farmer, who put him to School to the Parson of the Town where he

he was born. Young Bacon took his Learning so fast, that the Priest could teach him no more; his Master meeting his Father one Day, told him that he had received a great Blessing of God in that he had given him so wise and dutiful a Child as Roger Bacon was, and advised him that he could shew his Thankfulness to God so well, no other way than by bringing him up a Scholar, as he was likely to become a great Clerk. Old Bacon was not well pleased, but out of Reverence to the Priest concealed his Anger; thanked him for his Counsel, but desired him to speak no more concerning that Matter, that he knew best how to please himself.

When the old Man got home, he called to his Son for his Books, which he locked up, and gave the Boy a Cat Whip in his Hand. Take this, says he, I'll teach you the Use of it, it will be more profitable than harsh Latin. Make no Reply, but follow my Counsel, or else by the Mass thou shalt feel the Smart of my Anger. Young Bacon thought this but hard dealing, yet made no Reply, but in six or eight Days he gave his Father the Slip, and
went

went to a Cloyster about twenty Miles off, in which Place he was entertained, and so continued his Learning with great Diligence, and in a short Time came to be so famous, that he was sent for to the University of Oxford, where he long Time studied, and grew so excellent in the Secrets of Art and Nature, that not England only, but all Christendom, admired him.



C H A P.



CHAP. II.

How the King sent for Friar Bacon, and of the wonderful Things he shewed before the King and Queen.

THE King being in Oxfordshire at a Nobleman's House was very desirous to see him, and sent to desire him to come to Court. Friar Bacon kindly thanked the King by the Gentleman, but Sir, said he to the Gentleman, I pray you make haste or I shall be at Court two Hours before you; I can hardly believe that says the Gentleman, for Scholars, old Men, and Travellers may lie by Authority. To strengthen your Belief, within this four Hours I will shew you the last Wench you lay with. Away rode the Gentleman full Speed, but lost his Road, and tho' he had but five Miles to ride yet he was three Hours in riding them, so that Friar Bacon with his Art was with the King before he came.

The



The King kindly welcomed him, and desired he would shew him and the Queen some of the Skill they had heard so much of: I am worthy, says the Friar, of neither Art nor Knowledge should I deny this Request. Then the King and Nobles sat down, which were no sooner done than the Friar waved his Wand, and such excellent Musick was heard that they were all amazed; this is, says the Friar, to delight the Sense of hearing. I will delight all your other Senses ere you depart; so waving his Wand again there was louder Music heard, and immediately five Dancers appeared, the first like a Laundress, the

the second like a Footman, the third like a Usurer, the fourth like a Prodigal, the fifth like a Fool : These after having done their dance vanished away in their Order as they came. Then waved he his Wand again, and suddenly there appeared before them a Table richly covered with all Sorts of Delicacies. Then desired he the King and Queen to taste of some certain rare



Fruits, which they did, and was highly pleased with the Taste ; they being satisfied, he waved his wand again, and sud-

denly there came such a Smell, as if the richest Perfumes in the whole World had been there prepared in the best Manner that Art could set them out; whilst he feasted their Smellings, he waved his Wand again, and there came divers Nations in sundry Habits, who, after some odd fantastic Dances in their Country



Fashion, they vanished.—The King then returned the Friar Thanks for his extraordinary Skill and presented him with a costly Jewel from his Neck. The Friar

with great Reverance thanked his Majesty, and said, “ As your Majesty’s Vassal you shall ever find me ready to do you Service. But amongst all these Gentlemen I see not the Man that your Grace sent for me, sure he has lost his Way, or else met with some Sport to detain him; whilst he was talking, entered the Gentleman all bedirtied [for he had rid through



Ditches, Quagmires, and Waters, and was in a most pitiful Case) he seeing the Friar there, looked full angrily at him and

and bid a Pox on all his Devils for they had led him out of his way and almost drowned him. Be not angry Sir, said the Friar, here is an old Friend of yours that hath tarried these three Hours for thee; with that he pulled by the Hangings, and behind them stood a Kitchen Maid with a Basting Ladle in her Hand, now I am



says he as good as my Word, for I promised to help you to your Sweet-heart, how do you like her? so ill, answered the Gentleman, I will be revenged of you. Threaten not said Friar Bacon, lest I do thee more Shame, and do you take heed how you give Scholars the Lie again, but because I know not how well you are stored with Money, I will bear your Wench's Charges home; with that she vanished away.

away. The King and Queen, and all the Company laughed to see with what Shame this Gentleman looked on his greasy Sweet-heart. So Friar Bacon took Leave of the King, &c.



CHAP. III.

How Friar Bacon served his Man who would fast for his Conscience Sake.



FRJAR BACON had only one Man to attend him, and he was none of the wisest, for he kept him only for Charity, more than any Service he had for him.— This Man's Name was Miles; he never could endure, as other religious Persons

did, to fast for he always had in one Corner or other, Flesh, which he would slyly eat when his Master eat Bread only. The Friar seeing this, thought, one Day or other to be even with him. which he did the Friday following in this Manner: Miles on the Thursday Night before, had provided a great Black-Pudding for his Friday's Fast. He put the Pudding into his Pocket, thinking to heat it so, for his Master in those Days kept no Fires; on the next Day who was so demure as Miles, for when his Master offered him some Bread, he refused it, saying, his Sins deserved a greater Penance than one Day's Fast in a whole Week; his Master commended him for it, and bid him take heed he did not dissemble, for if he did it would at last be known;—if I do says Miles I am worse than a Turk; so went he forth as if to pray privately, but it was for nothing but to prey privately on his Pudding; he pulled it out, half roasted with the heat of his Bum, and fell to it lustily, but he was deceived, for having got one End into his Mouth, he could neither get it out again nor bite it off, so
that

that he stamped for help ; his Master hearing, came, and finding him in that Manner, took hold of the other End of the Pudding, and led him to the Hall and shewed him to the Scholars saying, See here my good Friends and Fellow Students, what a devout Man my Servant is,



he loved not to break a Fast Day. witness this Pudding which his Conscience will not let him swallow: Then he fastened him to the Window by the other End of the

the Pudding, where he stood like a Bear tied by the Nose to a Stake, and endured many Flouts and Mocks, at Night his Master released him from his Penance; Miles was glad of it, and vowed never to break Fast Days whilst he lived.





CHAP. IV.

How Friar Bacon formed a Scheme whereby he could have walled England about with Brass, by making a Brazen Head to speak.

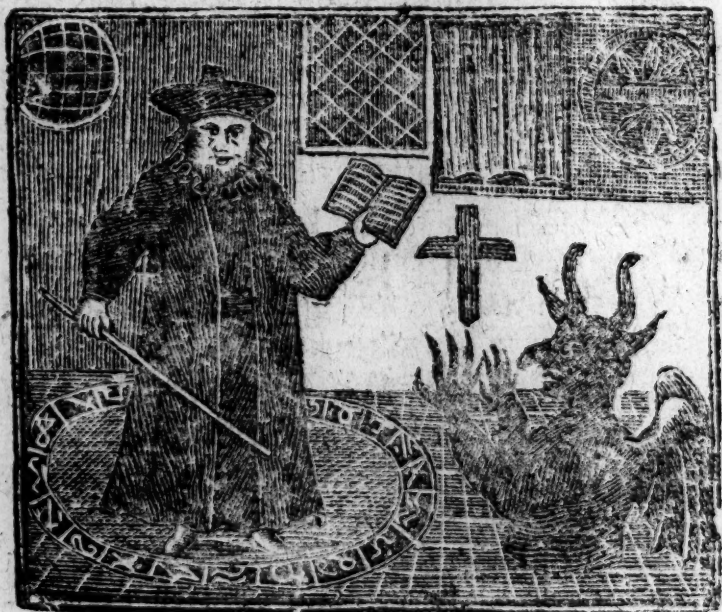


ONE Day as Friar Bacon was reading of the many Conquests of England, bethought himself how he might secure it from the like Conquests, and making himself famous to all Posterity. This after great Study, he found could not be so well done by any way but one, which was to make a Head of Brass, and if he could

could make this Head speak and hear when he speaks he might be able to wall England about with Brass. To this Purpose he got one Friar Bungey to assist him, who was a great Scholar and Magician. These two with great Study and Pains, so framed a Head of Brass, that in the inner Part thereof, there was all things as in a natural Man's Head: This being done, they were as far from Perfection as before, for they knew not how to give these Parts Motion, without which it was impossible it should ever speak; they in vain try'd many Means, till at last they concluded to raise a Spirit, in order to know of him what Method they must take. To do this they prepared all Things ready, and went one Evening to a Wood, and after many Ceremonies used, they spoke the Words, of Conjurati^on, and the Devil straight appeared; asking them what they would have? Now said Friar Bacon we have made an artificial Head of Brass, which we would have to speak, to the furtherance of which we have raised thee, and here we will keep thee unless thou tell us the way to make this Head speak.

The

The Devil told him he had not that Power of himself. Beginner of Lies said Friar Bacon, I know that thou does dissemble, therefore tell me quickly, or here shalt thou be bound during our Pleasures. At these threats he consented to do it, and told them that with a continual Fume of the hottest Simples it should have Motion and in one Month's time speak the Week or Day he knew not, but told them, that if they heard it not speak all their Labour would be lost.



Then

Then the Friars went and prepared the
 Simples, and made the Fume and attend-
 ed when the Brazen Head should speak :
 They watched continually with the Brazen
 Head for three Weeks, when they were
 so weary and sleepy from Rest that they
 could refrain no longer. Then Friar
 B con called his Man Miles. and intreated
 him to watch whilst they slept, and to call
 them when the Head spoke, all which
 Miles promised to observe. The two
 Friars then went to Rest and left Miles to
 watch the Brazen Head. Miles to keep
 himself from sleeping, got a Taber and
 Pipe and sung the following Song ;

To couple is a Custom,
 All Things thereto agree,
 Why should not I then love,
 Since Love to all is free.
 But I'll have one that's pretty,
 Her Cheeks of Scarlet dye,
 For to breed my Delight,
 When that I lig her by.
 Tho' Virtue be a Dowry,
 Yet I love Money Store,
 If my Love prove untrue,
 With that I can get more.

The

The Fair is oft inconstant,
 The Black is often proud;
 I'll chuse a lovely brown,
 Come Fidler scrape the Crowd,
 Come Fidler scrape the Crowd,
 For Peggy the Brown is she,
 Must be my Bride, God guide,
 That Peggy and I agree.



With his own Music and such Songs as
 these, he spent his Time, and kept him-
 self

self from sleeping ; at last the Head after
some Noise spoke these Words,

Time is.

Miles hearing it speak no more, thought
his Master would be angry if he wakened
him. Thou Brazen fac'd Head, says he,
has my Master taken all this Pains about
thee, and thou requites him with two
Words ; Time is, if thou canst speak no
wiser they shall sleep till Dooms-day for
me ; I know Time is, Goodman Brazen
Face.

Time is for some to plant,
Time is for some to sow,
Time is for some to graft
The Horn, as some do know,
Time is for some to eat,
Time is for some to sleep,
Time is for some to laugh,
Time is for some to weep,
Time is for some to sing,
Time is for some to pray,
Time is for some to creep,
That have drunk all the Day.
Time is to cart a Bawd,
Time is to whip a Whore,
Time is to hang a Thief,
And Time is for much more.

About Half an Hour after the Head spoke again, two Words more, which were these,

Time was.

Miles respecting these Words as little as he did the former, and in Scorn of it sung this Song.

Time was when thou a Kettle were,
 And filled with better Matter;
 But friar Bacon did thee spoil,
 When he thy Sides did batter,
 Time was when Conscience dwelt,
 With Men of Occupation.
 Time was when Lawyers thrive,
 So well by Men' Vexation;
 Time was when Kings and Beggars,
 Of one poor Stuff had Being;
 Time was when Office kept no Knaves,
 This Time it was worth seeing;
 Time was when a Bowl of Water,
 Did give the Face Reflection;
 Time was when Wom n knew no Paint,
 Which now they call Complexion.
 Time was I know that, Mr. Brazen
 Face, without you telling it; if thou
 speakest no wiser, no Master shall be wak'd
 by

by me. Thus Miles talked and sung another half Hour away, when it spoke again these Words;

Time is past.

Then it fell down with a prodigious Noise, with great Flashes of Lightning, so that Miles was half dead with Fear; at this Noise the two Friars awaked, and wondered to see the Room so full of smoke but that being vanished, they might perceive the Brazen Head broke, and lying on the Ground; at this Sight they grieved, and called Miles to know how it came; Miles, trembling, said that it fell down of itself, and that with the Noise which follow'd he was almost frightened out of his Wits. Friar Bacon asked him if he did not hear it speak? Yes, quoth Miles, it spoke, but to no Purpose, I will make a Parrot speak better in less time than you have been learning this Brazen Head. Out on the Vilain, said Friar Bacon, thou hast undone us both; hadst thou but called us when it spoke, all England had been walled round with Brasse, which would have been to its everlasting

lasting Glory and our eternal Fame,
 What were the Words it spoke, said the
 Friar? Very few, and those none of the
 wisest, said Miles; first it said, Time is;
 and half an hour after it said, Time was;
 and about half an hour after that said,
 Time is past; and then fell down, which
 made such a great Noise as waked you
 methinks. At this Friar Bacon was in
 such a Rage, that he had certainly beat
 him, had not Friar Bungey restrained him;
 but nevertheless, with his Art he struck
 him dumb for a Month. Thus was this
 great Work overthrown by this Fellow's
 Simplicity.

End of the FIRST PART.

